

West Central Region Forest Pest Update – 3/6/2006

Topics covered this month:

Insects:

Snow fleas
Gypsy moth spraying

Diseases:

none

Other:

Porcupine damage

Snow Fleas- (Todd) You may start getting phone calls from the public concerning snow fleas. People out walking may notice little black critters in the snow that jump. These are known as snow fleas or springtails (Order Collembola). With the warmer temperatures, snowfleas are making their annual appearance and you usually find them congregating in animal tracks. They will not cause



any harm to man or beast. Springtails usually feed on decaying vegetation, fungi, bacteria, arthropod feces, pollen, algae, and other materials. A few species may cause damage in gardens, greenhouses, or mushroom cellars.



Gypsy Moth- (Bria) The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) plans to treat sites in West Central WI for gypsy moth control. Some spray blocks will be treated in May or early June with two applications of Btk about 7-10 days apart, or a single application of gypsy moth virus called NPV. In late June and July, other blocks will be treated with pheromone (FAIR-uh-mone) flakes. These tiny plastic flakes carry the scent of the female gypsy moth, confuse the male moths, and disrupt the mating cycle. The maps will soon be available at <http://gypsymoth.wi.gov>. DATCP will mail additional notices to people living in and around the spray sites and notify local media and local officials.

DATCP 2006 Proposed Treatment Sites

168,769 acres – 21 counties - 87 sites

43 sites (40,368 acres) to be treated with *Bacillus thuringiensis* sub. sp. *kurstaki*

28 sites (123,506 acres) to be treated with pheromone flakes

16 sites (4,895 acres) to be treated with NPV

County	Btk Sites	Flake Sites	NPV Sites	Total Acres
Ashland	2 sites	1 site	3 sites	18,197
Bayfield	4 sites	4 sites	--	41,703
Clark	3 sites	3 sites	3 sites	27,200
Eau Claire	1 site	--	---	461
Grant	1 site	--	---	764
Green	3 sites	1 site	---	5,290
Iowa	12 sites	3 sites	---	19,303
Iron	--	1 site	--	8,957
Jackson	---	8 sites	6 sites	22,352
Juneau	--	1 site	--	337

Lafayette	1 site	--	--	1,310
Lincoln	2 sites	--	--	647
Monroe	--	6 sites	4 sites	16,521
Oneida	3 sites	--	--	1,281
Richland	3 sites	--	--	1,058
Rock	1 site	--	--	152
Sauk	1 site	--	--	657
Taylor	1 site	--	---	580
Trempealeau	1 site	--	--	786
Vernon	1 site	--	--	538
Vilas	3 sites	--	--	675
Total	43 sites	28 sites	16 sites	168,769



Porcupine Damage- (Todd) I looked at a Red Pine plantation last month in Portage County and wasn't sure what was going on. The red pine had wounds that were covered with black sooty mold, and some of the trees were completely girdled. But the girdled trees continued to put on growth above the girdle - weird. Some of the girdled trees still had healthy looking crowns or branches, while others were dead. With the help of Kent Glazer and Lyle Eiden, we were able to collect a sample which I sent down to Fitchburg to have Kyoko Scanlon and Jane Cummings Carlson to look at.

Kyoko talked to Shane Weber (Forest Health - Spooner), and brought up the bizarre red pine sample with apparent porcupine damage. Kyoko explained that below the girdle, the tree had 7 years of growth, and above the girdle had 13 years of growth. Shane said he's seen that before and that he has an explanation for it. When a porcupine injures a tree, it injures a portion of the sapwood. The injury is to the phloem, but the xylem can still function. Nutrients can still move up from the roots, but metabolites from the crown won't move down because of the severed phloem, which allows the tree to grow above the girdle. Once the supply of metabolites from the crown ceases to be transported down to the roots, the portion of the tree below the girdle stops growing. The roots slowly starve, but continue to supply nutrients to the tree for a while. Even after roots die, the crown may continue to survive for a while before the entire tree dies. All completely girdled trees will eventually die. Shane said he's seen completely girdled trees with decay fungi growing below the girdle, yet the crown still seemed okay. Shane said it doesn't seem to occur on very small trees, he usually sees this on 4 inch diameter or larger trees (the diameter of the sample was 3.2 inches below the girdle). Shane said the crown can live as long as 5-6 years after the stem is completely girdled. Teeth marks may disappear over time.

Sooty mold is a saprobe that grows on plant surfaces and derives nourishment from insect and plant secretions, including sap or resin associated with wounds. I had never seen sooty



mold growing on sap before. Here is a link to a brief explanation of sooty mold.
(<http://www.extension.umn.edu/projects/yardandgarden/ygbriefs/p440sootymold.html>)

A society grows great when old men plant trees
whose shade they know they shall never sit in.
~Greek Proverb